

Spring 4-1-2001

Columbia Poetry Review

Columbia College Chicago

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Columbia Poetry Review

Columbia College Chicago

SPRING 2001

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CONTENTS

COLE SWENSEN	1	Intro to the Palmar View
	2	Fingers I
	3	Fingers II
JENNI GRUTZMACHER	4	Of Possibles
	5	[You blue in slanted swoon]
SIMON CARNELL	6	The Rust That Sleeps
	7	My Name Is Huddie Ledbetter
DAVID DIGANGI	8	Big White Bones
	10	Bathe(d)
	11	Glen Meditation I
AMIRI BARAKA	12	Low Coup Mas
	13	Memo to Bush 2
MICHAEL BERNSTEIN	14	A Means to Exit
	16	What Was Brave
	17	Space Travel
TARA BETTS	18	Tara
K. WILLIAM LOGAN	19	3 Thoughts (1-11-01)
		Millennial Tea
KERRI SONNENBERG	22	Bird's Bird
TONY TRIGILIO	23	Letter of Resignation
	26	Rational Parking
STEFANI IRYNE	28	5:00 A.M. Sulk
	30	Immature
	31	Smoke Jumper
KRISTEN BRADSHAW	32	Proclivity
	33	Second Proclivity
	34	Third Proclivity
ARMANDO BALLESTEROS	35	Liz's Jar
KIM HAYES	36	Existential
SUSEN JAMES	38	Longitudinal
	39	Irregularities of Faith
GREG POKARNEY	40	Miss Erotic Montana
	41	Self-Portrait,
		Waving Adieu! Adieu! Adieu!
	42	Contents
DIANE DIPRIMA	44	Dull Poetry Reading
		Cut-up & Thots
BILLY TUGGLE	45	"Is"

RYAN PHILIP KULEFSKY	47	Poem Cheapened and Composed by (and While Passing Through) a Navel Gazers America
	51	There Once Was a Shifty Zen Yankee from Poughkeepsie
ART LANGE	55	(From) <i>On White</i>
ELIZABETH ANDERSEN	59	NY Scenes
	62	Pause
CLARE KELLY	63	The Kid Had Too Much Cereal
PAUL HOOVER	64	Circumstance
	67	We've Decided
ELAINE EQUI	70	Asking for a Raise
JORDAN STEMPELMAN	71	Time of the Run
	73	From a Tree and Further
GARY MASON HEAD	75	Spektral Cud Arrow
	77	5aturn's Re-Torn'ed: The Loo[p]ing Palms
CAROL KEELEY	85	Willey Water
	87	Magnificat
CLAYTON ESHLEMAN	88	At the Tusk Hotel
	89	A Spangled Moor
STAN RICE	90	19th Century New World Landscape Painting
	91	Why Sex Exists
SEAN SLIVE	92	Ballooned
	93	Ends
BRIAN HENRY	94	Miniature Entourage
ZOE SPIRRA	98	Housebound
	101	In the Summer of Short Pants
DEVIN JOHNSTON	102	Family Tree
	104	Shelley
TONY HOOPER	106	Lane Guage Roads Stryping Through Mouths
KATHY LOVESKY	108	Charmless World
SHARON DARROW	109	Hands Attract
	111	A Basic Question
MURRAY MOULDING	112	Jason A.
KATE KREKE	113	Where Strong Things Grow
JENN MOREA	114	The Translator's Wife
KATHLEEN SULLIVAN ISACSON	115	Threads of Judgment
HENRY ANSELMO	118	Old Man Playing Computer Hearts Before Bed

Columbia Poetry Review

COLE SWENSEN

INTRO TO THE PALMAR VIEW

The hand that is not a small world
flexor, fascia and fibrous expansion
from the condyle humerus
comes
and over the annular ligament does at the gates of
(hold this)
and the opponens muscles of the thumb. Some
dumb piano, summer drones on. Palms and the calluses of the palm,
the upper plains, red and to this extent
an eminence composed
passes over
ends in
the ability to fold a newspaper on a moving train.

FINGERS 1

The other positions vary; they are beyond and so the creases are not opposite. They are beyond. is tightly closed of differing lengths, bevel, apex of the knuckles, which point it never reaches, as far as crowding will permit.

FINGERS 2

and belongs with them

is trying to say soar

the fingers when
straight

are all that palm extended beyond the palm

a portion bends

with them

my friend

goes

the many and the several

had there been a plain a
geometric entity

that spelled in space

the constellation crane or ibis or heron

it's the length to depth

ratio one of those

things that makes you say

how on earth do they stand or how do they fly

or some
small unlikely

flock of bones

JENNI GRUTZMACHER

OF POSSIBLES

Pink girl in-furring edges.

The house is settling.

Stinks of berry.

The feebleness of marrow.

Pre-seeding as to suck seed.

The tingeing of bones.

The wane of gone.

Flesh weights from ribs, caged.

To lean in as suggesting cohesion.

In spite of what exactly.

A shift in vested.

He smells like fire.

[You blue in slanted swoon]

You blue in slanted swoon
A pickling of pretense
Such vast, still unseen tense—
That mirrored lovely of credence
And presence
It's booming as sorted and
Limerick as god.

You, you in breasted pressings
Less epic transgression—
Field nonsense and dizzy
Still metered, fuck pretty
Make wait the ambition—
Descending from vision.
Incision as crusted and heavy
As breath.

Spilt even, full-heavy
Such limbs-pale, lamented
Hanged libra and pulling her—
Stone scales weight the ground.

SIMON CARNELL

THE RUST THAT SLEEPS

Invent a future artist who will work with rust,
with time-lapse images of things that rust,

with the things themselves. Place him on outskirts
rifling skips—and just now, looking at allotments.

The drip about to fall into the rain-butt
globes the sheds and trees of the allotments.

The rain-butt is an old tin bath, the picture
on its surface a greenish watery Vermeer

of sky and village. A stoved-in watering can,
a scarecrow tin-can-tree. A pile of tins,

a scattered nest of bolts. The corrugated huts,
fences patched with bedsteads, fenceless gates.

A hole-punched oil-drum a home-made brazier:
the allure of things that rust to ochre:

rubbed they'll stain like pollen—scab when wet;
flake and powder when dry, “like dirt.”

The rust artist has a problem of scale, resolved
into opportunity. At one end there's a shipyard

of hulks and gantries—space and exhibits both.
At the other there's “the world's smallest moth,”

painted on a pinhead with a solution of rust.

MY NAME IS HUDDIE LEDBETTER

Dogface, Iron Head, Two Heads...*Lead Belly*:
dubbed by Louisiana's penal Angola,
Huddie Ledbetter—convicted murderer
and Sioux-blooded (it's apocryphal)
bluesman from the swamplands—
is “here to do a few songs between homicides,”
and perform for the annual conference of the MLA.

Cowboy yodels, worksongs, hollers, nursery rhymes,
a tribute to Blind Lemon—
as hybrid as a theta with an umlaut
or sedillas on a double en—
picked out on a booming Stella twelve-string
at the bottom of a bill headlining
a pleasant garland of Elizabethan song.

And Huddie drove the car that contained the machine
that recorded the songs that went from the prisons
to the archives of the Smithsonian—
even his answers to interviewers
rapped out in rhyme—on a contract which included
Lomax's ironing and shoeshines.
Whatever. Can pick a bale a day. *The farmer*

took the boll-weevil and put him in the sand.
Boll-weevil said to the farmer
you is treating me like a man—and I'm looking
for a home. And I'm looking for a home.

DAVID DIGANGI

BIG WHITE BONES

how are those big white bones of yours?
 on saturdays, my hero
i like the way the sky runs from your breath
 and is tonedeaf
you hold little places of me up to a strange light
 examples of bad hair
and every inward comes falling down through the ethers
 (h)erotic
not today, it's bigger than smoke over cities seen from cities
 the master looms with cloak
large mammals making steam beneath these large lighted faces
 but unemployed
big blustering sex, and alleys with trash tumbling through them
 angry fiberoptics
the remedy for cancer in the outline of cold, yesterday
 watch me die again
she stands back and rubs her warm parts from her knees
 allergies in sweatpants
and god is a plate of infinite rice beneath hot, wet towels pressed to her eyes
 badly drawn luck
no, god is the watching of this water on her face unwet itself
 he(rot)ic
in cities like these, she believes she is too small for her large puffy coat
 death to sicily
this morning turning over to pull the sheets from between our knees

armed, stubborn
no, we are not lizards because we can not fight this smallness
each sand is soaking
we are something almost like bones, but most certainly not small
it slides
was it a two flat? a three story fall that killed her?
i assume you
under cities are perfect white handkerchiefs impersonating rags
i am never

BATHE(D)

the old tub is wet with rust
that spreads out from the drain

slow brown palms reach for the white

stiff are the pipes now
in them once poured things
lost hair
soap like warts
skin

he soaks up the ground
face pulled down on those cheek bones
deep down to pipes that once caught the
slick from his back and drank

just the thought of new chrome
and the shine that leaps from it
makes the dirt in his head stir.

GLEN MEDITATION 1

full fill
 upper lipshake
 one stocking, white
what are clean things tonight?
 zippercase

that delicious grinding sound
of scotch, as it stands naked
 beside the poet
 cold hands
 fanned over
 warm penis.

the groin of his nose
 against the warmth of the room
 against the brass edges of wind
 tapping at too-thin windows
is a tart puddle.

that ridiculous sound
of my retraction, as it stains her new sheets
 a streak for each cube
 now warmer, dense
 crackling in the malt.

i think i shall have her clothed, tonight.

AMIRI BARAKA

LOW COUP MAS

Missed Tickle

(for the organist)

If the dead

Go on strike

Congress

Will

Disappear

2

If the dead

Go on strike

Both the democrats

& the republicans

will continue

as Scabs

3

The Return of Lon Chainee

If you see a Negro

With a White Ring

Around his mouth

Goober Dust

Will not

Help.

MEMO TO BUSH 2

The main thing wrong
With you

Is

you aint

In jail.

MICHAEL BERNSTEIN

A MEANS TO EXIT

is it
 heat ,
a map ,
 the
 shape
that

 sand
takes
 when
 traced
as wealth. a
 lunar
 blanket ,
the burn
 thrust
 up in
mime. and
 crawl-
 ing.
 she drags
this
 here ,
 floods
it
 w/snow
 &
 symptoms.
 what
 turned out
grime ,
 blister ,
 a drive
 into
quiet ,

a low
gold
wrung-
out

WHAT WAS BRAVE

he takes the
joke from this—
finds the pulse
in earnest,

free to work
the glass and
make the hall
blush green.

it is his
debt, the wax
cheer, a torch-
song knife,

small girls in
sore orbit. w/
luck that must
blot fame,

he hacks all
growth, lit up
mock-dead in
long smoke,

spent from the
first gun on,
the man w/
huge legs

SPACE TRAVEL

to be
quick, sheer,

a vehicle
of tar.

this lens
demands it,

leaves the
cellar wet,

our word
for color.

what stops
the stage,

an iced-
up beam.

the craft
seats four.

and charms
this plane,

this sleep-
walk chrome,

in three
and void

TARA BETTS

TARA

My name bloomed from my father's lips
during a blizzard

A teenage girl from Pakistan
told me my name means star
She thinks I will be one
since I am already

While sighing I saw the pale green
statue of Tibetan goddess born
from the eyes of Avalokiteshvara
reaching out the rays of her arms
This goddess looked over love
and its veins of compassion
She slept in the vowels of my name

My name smiles in these vignettes
Not when people mention
a *Gone with the Wind* plantation
tangled in Irish-Gaelic zephyrs
twisting through pinnacles

Not when I cringe under
my mother's voice yelling
my full name

Tara Jean Betts
which was almost
Monique or some other
French nom de plume
discarded for the four-petal bud
my father discovered
one January morning

K. WILLIAM HOGAN

3 THOUGHTS (1-11-01) MILLENNIAL TEA

Lulling Tide

she reached for perception, in her felt
for him she was noose
smiling sad
while he
kicked out the chair.
a pill polished by the moon so low and water
breaks,
a hard shell buys the see
and you wait up
in the North country, fair
she waits, scared
and turns from
and returns,
assail her wind.

Wearing China Like a Basket Omni Head

dancing on umbrellas of chiming
shade tree's exploding
this delicate course

peepholes
toys for <AI>

chariot race.

at the toe of the stage the debris
swarmed like June of 44, Normandy's red shore

but this was vague

and the angel terrestrial just sat there,

unhinged.

Chicago as Paris on Sillycyber

Metropolis Rex
Hold me.
sting me with your photograph face
horizontal eyeswheat
flat head screws
like ankle bones
the trophies of sweat
militant hopscotch, the game of squares
ends in ties,
bathing with fish and
molotov soap,
hunted
by the faces
you can't clever
to reach
and clean.

KERRI SONNENBERG

BIRD'S BIRD

A clear waist is a wing for little inquiry. Pre a parallel shadow,
I or no, less often than in birded lacklight. While over such skin
as even the outline of stain thrall'd, water and moreso, the interchange
meant to take, taken to mean.

An again wing supposing
one finished fold and how it likes in circling. The kind it occurs
in the thing of us that is unsighted, whetted in at once. Not near
or nearly a frame by flight tided between me.

I and as such thought to act your name.

Titled aloft it surpassed the coming too, pitched a scape to try your X on.

Our placement to an underwing conspired as pier and current which moves.

In the space of first words not what, where, but this

this landing din.

TONY TRIGILIO

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

—for K.S.

you are writing
 a letter
 of resignation
 you put down

your pen
 & turn on
 the radio
 you say—

“you say to yourself
 ‘I want to listen
 to this song
 very closely’”
 so you start
 listening—

“degree
 of distraction
 is proportional
 to degree
 you’re curious
 about answering
 the questions
 you’ve asked yourself
 before?”

 you realize

the song
 has been playing

 while you thought all this

and earlier
you decided

not to be distracted

and this
is an iconic
situation—

you must picture
the situation
or someone else
may transcribe
what you've been saying

maybe as a poem—

who am I to say?

what am I
to say,
“do this
in memory
of me?”

while this
goes on
your picture
may find an

unaccountable block
(for example
running out of ink)

you must
capture

the nature
of this iconic
situation—

including this—

to accept this
new challenge

“I am eager

meanwhile

my best

efforts

will go

into training

every day.”

RATIONAL PARKING

We can
only know
narratives

through past
events.

They shake us
into dis-
location

so we
can create
again,

the ends
of things
unpronounced.

Unpronounce-
able. Someone,
somewhere

is probably
overcooking,

is enveloping
your car,
will steer you.

It goes
without saying.

There's courage
there, but only
as a space

for the humor-
ous, a way
to talk back

or get
the last word

or visualize
space
before you

even start
the car.

STEFANI IRYNE

5:00 am SULK

for lou and c.m.

yellowing for two hours still
a lipstick radio hike
the cigarette in hand urgency
to contest the existence of phone calls
talking, drinking, smoking, any-ing
that makes every opening
of our mouth original
until the sixth or seventh
and the moment is a moment
after all and can't stay
tripping through cigarette bud floors
toward ragdoll flophouse bulimia
choking eyes, "what's wrong"
it's the realization of teeth
and bathroom mirrors
that keeps the barstools warm
tango-ing symptoms of him
tussling in crowds
gestures that push
past their commonness
nudging feyness with a bogart lean
the -ism of apparently
a mood elevator
amplified right angles as to

various themes on drinking
opaque glances crowded
a hung up microphone blue
with an elsewhere kettle-ing in my belly

IMMATURE

How girl of me to peel pink paint off your words
to absorb tattoos and roof top syndromes
tip-toeing to the edge of alarm clock dresses
wake up wake up you've become convenient
a dangling desperate wishes to excuse me
I'm the echo the backside of your sentences
memorizing random ohio jack habits in thirds
so say it one more time what you claim
and I'll get off on this poem so sweet
you could never find the end of the bed
laying down your west side high like so
I cough up last night's words like fashion
a waiting language on finger tip glances
our limp sideways compromises watch
shy crush addicted to this skinny t-shirt depression
if an unbruised drunk knee if a dublin bathroom stall weekend
if 19 wasn't a disease if daddies came ready to assemble
if passiveness was a dress everyone wanted to wear
knock it back because I can't get back just a thought
I'm wasting my time on smokes and caterpillars

SMOKE JUMPER

for dale

sinking into the spot
that plays tight around the waist
balancing the inside of habits
when ambivalent becomes
edible teeth
the way gray looks
when written
digesting the misshapes
of rhetoric and verbs
the inbetweens of run-ins
and holding back
and it's my turn
to claim at first glance
but instead a glass to mouth
as to say now is
an insecure atlas
heavily peddling
breathing the supposed
where fever outgrows its practice
a sub-daughter's way of
anything you can give
the obvious laugh
a european thought
a guitar that can bend
a twenty minute vegas cigarette
to rearrange my belly
a new fish

KRISTIN BRADSHAW

PROCLIVITY [TWO ZEBRAS IN ONE GALAXY]

already it makes little sense to the jawbone. we translate
wavelengths into speed and draw tongue.

orbital coupling phenomenal blueshift.
television. moreover it seems the world
will end in fire or harbour at Rhodes.
our thoughts the accretion hypothesis give strength

where ashes go. the face goes mysterious
rapidly surfacing on a velocity curve. some rugged Phoebe
is turtle dust. stellar association sun the commonplace star or
remnant supernova. Light that light droop. inattention.

the one with an aqua lung
sounds a live

house. too soon having company and being permanent company

SECOND PROCLIVITY

Epistolary cues in one direction.

None the less in parallel cities, she tells me she thinks of Paris
and I of the man, or the Cinematheque [but]

Rodin and chisel, *where is your body now.*

Substitute ink: first she says one never speaks with Godot

but *i am inclined to believe myself*
on occasion.

He sees the Singular for her but makes no poison [for London]
The i acts out again
determined bellow of mor[t]ality.

She-too inverts the breast by dust—

what is neither substance nor air.

He lines.

THIRD PROCLIVITY

The mighty statue at rhodes has fallen again
so gather up your skirts to wash lichen stains
from fairy tales. speaking from [the] tail-
end of history, there is yet a life in His pocket
or some great mark of superiority and other
truths

come, let us borrow something verdant.

i spoil. i spoil.

cabbages half for cooking [and] half for stabbing
out a theatrical yearning. a glovemaker more befit the stage
than a wife, preferred by a mistress and a patron.

he doesn't figure into this equation though I think of him

when I eat pears.

ARMANDO BALLESTEROS

LIZ'S JAR

down there
in the village of
Nash
where dad
prescribes birth control
to friends,
the night sways
on rolling grass
with you

And your jar
on window ledge
catching the pallidness
of streetlights
devouring the night
glimpses of your
confessions

And myth,
the wind blowing
pale yellow curtains
over the jar
fully bare and wild
the cathartic fervor

so transparent
so copious of antithesis.

KIM HAYES

EXISTENTIAL

I

Because there is no one thing more ridiculous than
only these inner hooks fashioned out of clothes hangers
and momentum, the day yanked
and I responded as if yanked by a princess' impossibly long hair
from the teeth of her gold comb. Sleep's
pale body on its carved bed steadily diminishing
like a bar of soap in a dish.
Or the memory of a slim and short-lived
yet intuitive lover. Previously entwined
legs now wrap instead
around the memory of dim pink tights and
imagined prima ballerina positions. Father there
so proud of even awkwardness, so
proud and smiling and
absent.

II

Yanked like a car into a car
wash, the shower all water and darkness, water and darkness and those
ridiculous agitating brushes.
Then, as if roughly baptized at arm's length, even a minister afraid to douse
an atheist's daughter kindly, presented
spanking anew to the light.
Another alternate universe.
Another sluicing.
But not gleaming, no.
Instead the light has its way of accentuating
the beauty of flaw
and scar and limp and chip and guffaw and lisp and lilt and tilt.
Let's just say it's an older car. Pre-
driven. As if
age was something not even gigantic bright blue and white
brushes could expunge.
What's a princess but a regular woman

waiting for the men she loves
to die? Waiting
for her chance to rule.

III

A poem has its way of leaving its bride-to-be at the altar.
Of lumbering off the highway at 60 mph into great fields of slow wheat, its
way
of playing too rough with dolls.
Who here can explain
why we perpetually reach up and toward
like branches, down and back
like roots? The only evidence of our existence
the leaves.
And the leaving.

SUSEN JAMES

LONGITUDINAL

*The voice tells not so much as the connotation in a dream I read the lines in his
eyes the sighs in his palm inna blink of time I cannot recall locking the door
unshaping in sleep history retains the slope of memory he levitated above
the bed for a short expanse of time asked if easily I disturbed evening
descended a veil of still my houseful of saints shimmered by that I mean they were
speaking all around me hurtling through space at 67,000 miles-per-hour one
is forced to believe in gravity ginko biloba a tree of fan-shaped leaves ingested
in daily doses of 375 mg. ungarbles cognizance strangers entered inside me as
gestures a slivered moon in a six p.m. sky like the nailmarks I pressed perhaps
to his back or other testimony imagine my hesitation go with me here he
says just outside the lines I loose myself to the white marginal space grind-
ing faith with cinnamon for sweet trying to create a sense an eidolon order
from sleep to sleep meaning unfixes crosses over dented by society I held
stainless steel kitchen knives over my head to wand off harmful vibrations I
heard him speak the language of lanterns alas what pleasure in the eternal
swoon relying heavily on intuition echoes flesh secrets weight the atmosphere
a whitenoise of words music of my blood where does this place me in time
there is no coincidence or resemblance to here at the edge where all is adrift*

for Ellen Rosen

IRREGULARITIES OF FAITH with helpful definitions

do not hold this against me happenstance blest me thus Tante Luise avers suicide runs in the family Our Lady of the Divine Miracles and Our Lady of sorrows being one and the same there is a fine line betwixt religious experience and insanity this is how I disconnect from safe placement

Seven Holy Intervals—the first seven sundays in a season of mementos

Ave Luna—the basic dose voltage of religious current

in the meantime the moon creeping to align with mercury venus mars jupiter & saturn whose conjunction perhaps induces hailstorms a shift of earth's poles floods volcanoes & erupting diamonds in a holy commotion jeepers what a time to return from a coma I begin with deliberate sleepwalking in the dream mama and I drank water from two different shrines uttering a breathy gospel pure & simple girlish & I fell completely through the crack in the terracotta kitchen floortile infected by blinkering vapors nerves sparking she the levelheaded one arguing possible compromise in fog all light haloes even though they come to assist me I make the ghosts queasy

Witness Concordance—exiting the physical body as devotional practice

Inspired—to be impaled by a steeple

when mama said I wasn't of this world she didn't mean it in a good way & mama left her body in 1993 which doesn't make it any easier to disagree but I did surmise that some tones vibrate not only the vocal cords but also the bones in skull and spine & mama just shook her head after changing the vectors and adjusting the angles time is slippery atmosphere moist as tongue seeking the arc of origin further undoes the undoing forgiveness & prayer are the same compass direction alone to currents and winds oarless unmoored in reality we are all born without sin

Magdalene fulgance—restorance of beliefs

Ruminato—1. an obsession or compulsion with the lyric intensity of narrative 2. a sanctifying occasion

vis a vis position the speaker in a psychic moment sensory receptors overly responsive to surroundings a nail hammered through the left wrist to simulate stigmata while in full lotus position antepandial after all I have been spoken through before haunted by the light see how I glow athirst

GREG POKARNEY

MISS EROTIC MONTANA

He doesn't feel too much
like waking up today. Okay
She's basically chilly,
if not the optometrist
she says she is.

Behind the oval
his children are pretending to be
grown-ups, talking into tin-cans
and tulips.

"Go get 'em, boy!"
the old man next door with the
tender stick says to the bitch he
thinks is his son.

A splattering of
sunset is already moving across
the grass, amazed it's next in line.

Our girl's masturbating again.
Her fingers dreaming of science
experiments and painters

unaware

of the children under
her bed, trying so hard
to be children.

SELF PORTRAIT, WAVING ADIEU! ADIEU! ADIEU!

Such waving always tires my arm;
but at least the scenery is nice. A warm
breeze—but I'm wearing a hat.
Hundreds of ocean liners in the left
corner. My mom is on one of them.
She is no longer waving, her arm
having fallen off.

Each drop of color is petty.
There is an abstraction of blue,
which is wrestling with the idea of
god. It seems puny next to my
glittering visage. Just stand still:
the rocking makes my stomach hurt
and scares all the birds away.

I am leaving the land of the ditherings.
That smile you see is painted with fire,
with a nosebleed, with grandfatherwine.
Black violets grow up through the water,
and become braided with the water-girl's hair.
Erotic boys, acid shadows, and dogs on the run
were there too, but have since been censored.

If I were you, I'd look under the portrait
to the other portrait painted there before:
It shows the hundreds of orange fish,
devouring my father, dead at the bottom of the sea.

CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S PREFACE	7
<i>Chapter</i>	
I. Of Mr. Thomas Testimonial, his birth, education, (rather large endowments); with a word or three concerning the possibility of a journey.	13
II. Of Miss Horatio the chambermaid, and how Thomas was reluctant to bestow upon her the name "Peaches"; some otherwise, very poetic writing.	17
III. The sayings of three men. A dialogue between a rat and a hamster. A quite witty satire on the problems of modern courtship and carnal relations.	20
IV. What happend when Thomas and Miss Horatio divided up the watermelon. A surprising adventure with a housewife. The death of Thomas Testimonial Sr. A most fine elegy, ending with a quite modern dinner-party.	27
V. A short history of the world up until 1827. A disagreement of opinion and a matter of personal taste.	37
VI. A sublime dialogue between Thomas and Sir Foxencort and the rest of Iowa. Miss Horatio writes a letter. The consequences of drinking wine.	35
VII. Being chock full of adventure and suspense.	46
VIII. A pleasant reminder to set the clocks back. A brief matter in praise of dead children. An otherwise useless picture of the author's mother.	53
IX. Containing the mis-adventures of Thomas, Miss Horatio and the watermelon which were met in the air, scarcely unheard of by anyone who has travelled by ostrich.	58
X. A description of biography and beef.	62

XI.	In which Thomas and Miss Horatio meet Professor Snotson, and the reading of his forthcoming verse-novel <i>The Lonely Cymbal</i> . A brilliant sentence on modern poetics.	69
XII.	How it came to pass that rain fell down on the world. The arrival of Gamma and Gooseberry. Midnight adventures in the boudoir (among other places too numerous to make mention of here). A most sentimental account of Miss Horatio's left breast and the loss of a nipple.	74
XIII.	What passed between Thomas and the lady of ill-repute.	78
XIV.	Of which the reader can skip completely.	82
XV.	Theoretical insights, the like not to be found in the bathrooms of the British. A dreadful quarrel and the subsequent slaying of Professor Snotson. Another richly written elegy.	152
XVI.	An awkward proposal of marriage. Moral reflection by Thomas Testimonial, with an utterly worthless commentary by the author.	163
XVII.	In which history is continued with little regard for the reader.	171
XVIII.	The arrival of Mr. Thomas Testimonial, Sr., back from the grave. A comical dissertation on epic poetry among other things. A difficult dilemma for our hero. Miss Horatio bruises her knee.	179
XIX.	A most excellent commentary on the use of the "rhythm method" as legitimate birth control for Catholics. The second death of Thomas Testimonial, Sr. Hidden deep in the glorious prose: a fine recipe for Welsh Rarebit (which is still no substitute for an elegy).	211
XX.	Being the last. In which this true history ends with everything in its proper place as was intended from the beginning. A brief moment of congratulations to the reader for being so wise as to have read it. A grievous elegy on the end of a most brilliant and heartbreaking novel.	253

DIANE DI PRIMA

DULL POETRY READING CUT-UP & THOTS

Do you sniff thru perfect mirrors
Whenever you drink it, do this
Do you turn yr back & fly away
Lord of all life, below, above
I don't know
From the clash of race & creed
Nor from nothin'.
Where's Jeanne—where my
classically 1-yr-old grandson
My son sleeps fitfully on the couch
reads Dick Gallup—He's using up
too much of my white powder
high. Want to hear Dorn while
coke is still cooking in me—

October 27, 1977

BILLY TUGGLE

IS

Karma is a work in progress, kinetically manifesting... in total control of mind,
body and soul

Karma is birth and death—are you ready to live?

Karma is the last teacher, the next poet, sharing the facts when you know it

Karma is not plastic, it's orgasmic

Karma moves the poor to do something drastic

Karma moves at twice the speed of thought; it's what you made not what you
bought, what you give not what you own... from gold bars to the shell
that your soul calls home

Karma is “we,” complete, not competing, equaling 720 degrees

Karma is when “it” comes around

If you let it, Karma will take you higher, light your fire, don't wallow in the
mire of set ways and bad habits

When Karma presents the positive, grab it!

Karma is your unraveling sweater

Karma has no ceiling, no floor

Like it or not, Karma returns to bring you more exactly what you asked for

Karma is overconfidence and paying the cost, but also winning the battle you
thought was lost

Karma gets the ball with three seconds on the clock and got more game than
the NBA, the Olympics and the World Cup

Karma is the verdict, the equal and opposite action, both halves of the fraction,
bass and treble

Karma is trying to find the word that rhymes with “orange”

Just when you think you figured it out, Karma's what you get for thinkin'!

Your sphere of influence is shrinking when yours underlaps another in a bad
cycle, but I digress

Karma is relief of stress, the choice is yours

Karma that is... was that the answer or the question?

Karma is both with no second guessing

Since Karma is circular, similar to the orbit of planets, I wonder why so many
take Karma for granted

Karma is the air that we breathe, the current of the seas, the movement of earth
from molten core to frozen poles, Terra and Luna's spartan trip around
Sol.

Karma is how the sun feeds us all

Karma is Allah, Vishnu, Orishas, Krsna, Yeshua, Buddha, Jah Ras Tafari and
will reflect upon your own satanic tendencies

Karma is the child of Mother Nature and Father Time and will kick your ass
every single time that you don't treat that kid like you would want to
be treated

Karma is the difference between victorious and defeated

Karma is as complex as 90% of the human brain

Karma draws the line between joy and pain

Karma is learning how to let go

Think the world is cold and life unfair? Ask karma if you dare!

I was wide awake when I wrote this, this whole world has gone astray

That's why I push karma every day

Karma is just enough light to see the entire picture

Deeper still, karma frames the entire picture

Karma is reading this poem.

RYAN PHILIP KULEFSKY

POEM CHEAPENED AND COMPOSED BY (AND WHILE PASSING THROUGH) A NAVEL GAZERS AMERICA

“On reaching Jesus they urged him strongly,
‘He deserves to have this done for him,
for he loves this nation and has built us
a synagogue.’”

—Luke 7:4

1

To taste
the

pipe(ing
trees)

of Penn.
Syl.

Vany.

2

Med)
blue

and re
quited.

O’ joy! O’ citadel!

3

But: still
us

lit'
tiles

stay
put, weak

and
near(Lee)

Jewish.

4

Is this
and

art(ist)
on

all
over

that can
be

call(ed)
correct?

5

“Teens.
The cheer

leads,
put

out and
gin

at Pitt.
(B)

cause of.

6

By sod
bank,

curse
ing heirs

and those
wet

sounds
of brine.

7

Our crime
sleaze

(inn).

Slides and
out

sides, (the
line.)

8

Dimes in
search

of its
tend,

quick and
mean

9

To the)
right—

Amy queer
dog

hates
it bad

when she
(’s)

sick and
master

(bates.

July 28–September 7, 2000

**THERE ONCE WAS A SHIFTY ZEN YANKEE
FROM POUGHKEEPSIE**

“We don’t want to hold our small businesses back.
We want everybody to go as high as they can,
but we must set a floor so nobody in our state falls
below at least this level.”

I

Plush can’t
say

what she
wants

to see
but,

it rea
(ally)

wanna
touch

chance and
a

bux
om

“a”
merica.

A good
life’s

pro.Ject.
How

ev(er)
nukes

are wise
(er)

than Jews,
but

“flukes are
mine

to lose,”
or

so said
dad.

2

Hard G.
I.(s)

kiss and
read

Eliot in
private.

3

This stom
(ache)

er will
not

pass for
naught.

“She is
way

too thin
for

that green
bottle.”

(Flow.)
Words

are an
ill

(u.)
Sion of

Sam’s
her(i)

tage and
crass

tro:

Jan’s horse.
It

is the
low

(cation) of
breath

that pass
is

over the
mean.

(Ing) of
“Mind

Breaths.”

4

The thing
I

like a
bout

god is
he

pays all
his

debts.

June 1–11, 2000

ART LANGE

(FROM) ON WHITE

(From) On White: 24

What echo, as any may
devour, hours in hand,
in common with this cold

eye, desire the small
detail, a twig of basil, to
warm the moment, warn

such curves as marsh
grass overgrown and blown
by March wind a melody

complex as a hug, or worn
smooth waiting for rain
to wrestle another angel,

prepare the air for color,
conflict, curiosity reigns,
Messiaen's modes of values

and intensities but the piano
still sings, its sad weight
agitated, contains the same

measure of care, to cure

(From) On White: 46

“Near the sketch, there were two superb Gaudiers in white marble: one was a curled-up sleeping cat, and the other a statuette of two nude figures... .”

Light as a lizard

the nude

lay siege

another casket

of frost

grasping at air

scorn exhaled

surrounded by charcoal

lines the image

he intended

all along

sweeping up leaves

brown and gold crackle

keeping contact

rose, nail or just string

dusk in jonquils

a flurry

of Corelli eventually

in his ear
oranges and smoke
busy work
a list is a leaf
desperate
like Picasso
to roll naked in the snow
wasted time
lack of perspective
a box of matches
olive oil
the bottle's shape
split disc
clueless
contagious
is other than that
other than other
restless divinity
imbroglio
in a deliberate
cavity of intention

a feast of Spanish blood

following the horizon

vin ordinaire

answer in anger

ELIZABETH ANDERSEN

NY SCENES

1

She balanced four inches over
his tilted chin
tousled hair
He was surprised to meet an Amazon

2

antennae scraped against wing
steel underbelly
a constellation ceiling
a grand
a pulse
an arriving

3

a missed banana
barter tongues translated
on sloped sidewalks
wind tunneled skirt hems
31, 32 I lost count
after blonde laugh
caught looking at her knees
the perfect crescent of her armpit
the parts of me distracted

4

Gino against door jamb mute
 but still granted gradient approval
 heel to hip to hair-line
 touched in fractures
 a 7/5's conversion
 found me more than whole
 less than half

5

jukebox jockey
 a personality profile
 09-05, 42-06, 11-03
 never heard of exile
 after fidelity challenge
 45s drop, spin
 a finger to shin

6

Cuban corn, blue tortilla
 table for one seats three
 knees mold around yours
 and elbows bracketed
 paid 25 cents for the peep-show
 traced ankle
 on another revolution
 the room needed body warmth
 and eider-down diversions

7

retreat to unisex water-closet
with tattooed roof
inappropriate tensions
corner-lip kiss
slid off couch

8

She teetered
backwards out bus window
with want of sky burnished iron flat
rise high head propped
on my knee

PAUSE

Accumulating a social force through centripetal action, the world dissolved into fourths: three minutes/1 gram of fat/used paperback/chap stick. Thrift conditions so don't leave the house bare armed. If the tables turn the world becomes off-balance, rolls to a flat. On a refusal to sight the horizon line, losing life by the thousandth of a foot and the air is too fast, too clean, you could sleep a Christian.

God's boot would stop it; it would become an indentation. Eighteen minutes in the washer doesn't accomplish much. Wouldn't buy you a cup of shit, he said, confused in the bathroom. Laces down to their last leg, frayed knots. Leaves a metallic smell in your palm, your hair. A decision settled with the wrong word.

The ache of an ending, echoes, revolutions recede into shadow. Only to be picked up and circulated, broke down, tossed and tarnished (the queer green of the used, lighter than mint jelly, ashes won't rub it away). Posited to lose weight, the day's salvation. The organic grace of an instant.

CLARE KELLY

THE KID HAD TOO MUCH CEREAL

The surrounding personalities
banging on the brain
and employing all of the ears for
the purpose of listening to 6 x 6
square thoughts,
brought on by a life sentence of
spongecake homes and pudding yards,
have slowly sucked the freedom from the veins
and replaced it with an
oversized i.v. of sssshhhuuussshhh!
So I have gathered all of my little clumps
of roasted thought and baked them
into memory-shaped cookies
so that everyone under the age of 12
will know that shrinkwrap and Sunkist
is only one way of looking at it all.
Because drug addiction does not start with Happy Meals
and more and more links have sucked themselves
through the bottom of the barrel,
running away from the burger,
just snatching the toy,
it is important that they know
getting out of the pudding and into some paper
can lead to a better understanding of why
it can be so important to misunderstand and
be misunderstood for the sake of eventually getting it.
P.S. Please write a letter to my mom
telling her I have finally been lost inside
my pocket and refuse to make my way
through all of this lint.

PAUL HOOVER

CIRCUMSTANCE

In place of life's
accumulations

and high slum peaks
the word *hero*

with its pickpockets
pimps
and cavesdropping smolletts

whose features are woven
all over the text
beaten with meaning

One is not strange
who reads these names

essential to the sequence
then as experience

The bookish frauds of nature
complete the seeker's faith

willow weep for me
or Dexter Gordon will

reprovingly

Emergency measures
are what one seeks

and one soft bell...

Feeling is seeing
an open landscape

feeble in form
yet powerful as fact

the weary mind
on its horizontal axis

I for example
am not the one supposed—

marks on walls
of the burnished
night dome

The world of examples
is likewise private

mother for instance
writing her books
on her knees in bed

The ideal shakes
but seeing is believing

A small child sings
what the father abandons

lifting the god
of structure
to the dragonfly's eye

A theory may be construed
of names & consternation

It hurts to be stainless
in a muddled world

where staged voices breathe
the sea's aspirations

& all one desires
is a thickened divination
of hieroglyphic fire

We are not familiar
with the anecdotal target
even as it moves

The book is not news
but a place on which to stand
until discussion ceases

I had felt lightly
the freshness of the hour

violence of water
forming into pools

each fall season
a skittering leaf
on driverless highways

imperious wanderings
toward an aperture
in the senses

but nothing this porous
sweetens with presence
or gestures in heaven

an interrupted departure
of scantness and speech

the smoking glass
in an empty room

The world is brief
and pinched in stone

& the fat earth means
to be in excess
of all that is

WE'VE DECIDED

1

I can be myself today, tall space ape
in a garden where other space apes play.
What a nice time this will be! and I
can roll on the sides of my balled feet
like a hairy barrel loaded, swinging arms
that scratch the ground like leaves. I'm
an ape today, headed for my pulpit of joy
in sunshine by the window. Daughter laughs.

That's good. We can hear her mother dressing:
conspicuous absent rustle, dry nylon and hair.
Oh, lord of the spinal cord, what stone
repose do I feel when high heels spike
the spilled roast beef? I do not play
no rock and roll. I am an ape today.

2

Spies can be themselves and pray, space shapes
like wardens where other space shapes pray.
What bright signs lists can be! and I
can play goalie on gliding robo-feet
like an aery feral gnosis, thinking of alms
that match the sound of waves. I'm
a shape that prays, shedding all culpable joys
in an undying window. Laughter laughs.

That's new. We can fear its other lessons:
continuous absent hustle, tight nylons and tears.
Ode bored with final form, what bone
composure do I feel when ideals strike
the still moist leaf? I do not spray
no phlox with oil. I am a shape today.

I can see the shelf OK, call space a grape
 in jargon since tender fresh grapes change.
 What a crime scene this will be! and I
 can roll on my bowling ball feet
 like a scary bear exploded, singing of charms
 that catch the sound of the sea. I'm
 a grape, OK, headed for my gulp of joy
 in the unshining window. Laughter gasps.

What's food? We can bear our brother *fressing*:
 despicable absent bustle, cry of lions and bears.
 Oh, lord of the penal code, what stoned
 exposure do I feel when spine feels like
 chilled ice tea? Nor do I ever say
 no lox and bagels. I am a grape, OK?

The eye can be itself today, space tape
 in a garden where other space tapes play.
 What a fine slime this will be! An eye
 call roll on the side of its raw seeing
 like a tarrying arrow slowing—singing words
 that flinch like *ounce* and *please*. Eye is
 itself today, shedding all its Tupelo joy
 in gunshine at the window. Daughter's black

in mood. She can fear the other mission:
 continuous ashen tussle of high pylons and air.
 Restored like the final chord, what tone
 exposure do I feel when spiked tea kills
 a thrilled ghost cleanly? The eye won't pay
 the landscape's toll. The eye is space today.

The shy can be themselves today—pace and gape
in a dungeon where others pace and gape.
What a fine shyness this will be! and shyness
can stroll the length of its long street
like a hairy chairman bloated, singing harms
that smash the proud like fleas. The shy
have faith today, headed for their populist joy
in the blind sign of a window. Father laughs,

“That’s good.” He can hear his mother’s lessons:
ubiquitous passion, dust, fine dye jobs, and prayer.
Torn like the final word, what prone
disposal do I seek when high steel strikes
a West Coast priest? The shy don’t play
with no damned fool. The shy are afraid today.

ELAINE EQUI

ASKING FOR A RAISE

Perhaps there is a color
I can sleep in
like a spare room.

Some uncharted green.

Some state I'd gladly travel to
in the center of a loud noise
where all is calm.

Snug in my cupcake hut
the difference between
sleeping with pills

and sleeping without them
is the difference between
talking into a telephone
and talking into a jewel.

Depression is an economic state.
Green is also the color of cash.

"All right, but what would you do
with more money if you had it?"

asks the businessman who greets me
with a lei of orchids.

"Shop for clothes," I answer.
"And treat my husband like a whore."

JORDAN STEMPLEMAN

TIME OF THE RUN

The unknown I thought of as one introducing
the other all at once. Centers hearing of nothing
frequent in either way, other stars
which in their precision carve themselves from believing
once again in the motion immune to passages; branching
outside their explosions.
Tunnels of sentiment enabled natural,
full of leash swallows and seasons
plain by their address. The extremes alone are the ones
who do nothing all day but toss and turn
beautified—outlets of cobra sneer and compressed lifetimes
sent following steps oblivious of the final interval.
I looked member then like my. And wait for the rag's
attraction to both icy mist and tickets, complete with spoken ends
sorting out this mixed-up fatherland. The call arriving
from all the out of towners, everyone else crowded around, deciding
whether the speck will fly before it's clasped again
closed and kept away from next fear, padded
game trails, even though blue dumpsters hang around the corner
with their illusion of crawling speed.
Clung again went in again, vainglory at the careless taste
among the steadily began, or there, or one limit.
And no one would think to be good when her conduct
was the dinner party
helped through by a handful of woman pops
before just asking it to blend as stem.
Whatever seemed to leave didn't utter then
but remained like one rescuing money
from a tight pocket—
checking on the lights from the second floor stairs, dull opening
in the dome. His view is for the rest. One individual check
full of oaths and sworn into bones charmed full
of, if fact, unlive real. Only in activity
does doubt find deluded regard for authentic guilt. Cleaning up
the piss left in the middle of the night with the sock
still on your foot, a smile in the mirror

at the confronted persistence for transition.

Where to look next, comes to mind

stages rocked two and fro by innumerable ways

cotton lassoes all over the child's nightie that go on

seeming too quiet for listening; stacks maintained by temper

interested in last pleasures being more ready than not.

FROM A TREE AND FURTHER

Leveled holler comes

over boasted

gusts, partly some

murmur. Deep

water lost single

files. Inked

otters tossing urchin,

so often

speak this foghorn

skied wail.

The disowned captain

ringing bells

for great martial

gargles belonging

to some hanged

unheard. Better

than acts, this

performance all

waxen with blue

prude stitch

and straight forearms
pass. Gatherings
are openings, renewed
yet bare.
Curtstied from lungs
to lodge
these lean navigations
of rib.

GARY MASON HEAD

SPEKTRAL CUD ARROW

“...don’t mistake my foliage for my fate”

Clayton Eshleman (from *Postentry*)

75

shut energy. soft neglects the ghost of
heaven

figures ((at this their waist)
deathing agg - enst
rock. their

cosmicrests. your pussy looks like a spider coming out of your ass.

the Sounds of the sea Feline’s Jaw / up, close, microscopic.
in the basement we kept some of our honey. the rest came
off on shirts, sheets and mmm culinary cervix ramps.

my (imagebisonhatchet)swab is a mayan, treeing into your sailing 47 movements
of your
vagiant.
of your yer.

—your vagrant— tortoise—
—you're vagrant—
 antennas push off your tongue
 artemis clots.
proud Mayan mystery disks.

pinched - *out* - mayo. the dick ladder.

bibicolostomy—scars keep me together.
tool-floated
 Gladiolas twinkle / pulpy and vast
 like lidded eyes. flayed ochre
 -and...

...inching an ice
 village bruise.

blowing this; a lacking existed / graphed by lioness fracture

and the *styles* of the racoonfire. boa.
 nosel and then ogre and then mask:
 pushing in your ribs
 with your own
 hands.

boa.

5aturn'5 Re-Torn'ed: the loo[p]ing palms

Mr. Giza = (Patient # 2985: Diagnosis ??? =
Purchase of a Yakface / kazoos around the house, solid red stone.
a member of the Foolish Munchkin Armada And the ORbiTuated Autopsy of ALmost
poor girls ignite his greatest Love.
urban pieces to feed the womb. maybe orchards of sniffing Lazarus, the crazed and lazy harp noise that fucks her

loins
to jade
like stiff-bitten.
tight breasts in a tight world.

*Mr. Giza would you please step to the right, and place your ultras and your soldier'ed geese against the wall.
do not strike pre emptive... do not mount the biggest cat. I know there is parade monkey bait but you'll have to try and not listen
to the sounds coming from down the hall.*

So beautiful that we h*te you.
School Girl Skirts
backseat tears
dicking white meat salad breathless.

*Mr. Giza would you please step away from past scribblings. The Mancamel has rights to them. You pretend I am eating
13 unicorns. You don't pretend however to remember the burned worms on the hot tennis court. Washington works that way.
We will not have any more of her curled-cat ass No more butterflies on green - processed desert
sheets. You need help Mr. Giza. Welcome to Chicago.*

(more mumbling))

whispers: if michael were here in his afterbERn he'd quote, like it was form: lightning soaks my sky
like a bright helmet. like a metaphor acting as a simile to personify its own

I mean who are we? dying at the end of a breast? anyway

*I think he's getting to Us. Look, Mr. Giza. There IS no cuntwoven blindwool.
cradledbe neath my lemontree. just rivers in the nude and take your medication. you are breeding Television static and it is
upsetting the other patients.*

"But I held *her*, (BITCH_). ... *her* words *her* voices that *soundlessly* drooled loose words. hot white wolves never entered the palace
dead wet kittens were never sent spinning. a roar. a blush ing.

he examined the unjournalled. then to Mr. Giza, *Mr. Giza it says here that petting zoos become chaos.
Is this true?*

of course it's true.

*okay we're not here to discuss the animals themselves just you
Mr. Giza. okay so the petting zoos, and the goats in them. maybe if you would tell us about the tar we could find out exactly how the
trauma of your mother spinning on an axis of redwine would lead to you sitting against the garage with a knife to your neck with only
your brother to save you.*

I thought we were not going to discuss the animals themselves, but you mention three of them. well starting with
the goat. legs of a goat. paddling through tar. thru a yellow tar. a wishing tar sweet as the groan from glass being handled under a
table when *she's* crying. you know my mother only pisses to connect to water because it rejects *her*.

because I am water.

in water you find wisdomatics. the rules of it. everyone over the age of number asks who rules. who rules that which bleeds no more. like an anthill carcass which is the same ghost of phlegm that met my face at birth.

*Okay I can see that we need to step out into the hall. This is where you tell us about your mother.
Speak to us from this side of the door. We will be on the other.*

doorthendoor.

faintful. and then taking it back. a gate—surrounded log of sickness. a small log.

okay are you spooked by lords, or just light(specifically)?”

all that can press is deliriums.)

44th (ground as lamb). 44^m altar. spare drums delivered by geese. the ones you had me place against the wall instead of just my hands.

you are worried about your safety I assume. I understand(s). by geese. named maryln. spelled that way for meaning.

of course Mr. Giza, of course.

toppled the other half of orange machinations of/of pitbull. 2 miles of a dog filling Isis Bottles. and in the morning: gloss, cast at its interior. prized in metals of the nexus sirensof the maryln geese. parts.

—oh parts. panties vase the hanging </whiterock/</ride/.

neon with felt leaf. parts of your “lemon direct” out side of him. (a cross-legg’ed carver). egg in the palm of Achilles.

Break? Ichew on the old, dark, belief of the midnight colour: a long coat.

salty.

maybe.

even congruently bland.

It sounds like you love your mother. it sounds like she loves you. what was the problem? What was this about a bucket of nails

sipping at your glands like an immoral nature?

my glans. not my glands.

(Ms. God screams from down the hall. connecting to the tele - rush coming rude).

*Just ignore her, Mr. Giza. Your mother will be fine in just a moment. She will remain quiet for quite a long time.
So you chew on the old midnight coat.*

But me a meal with onions.

*No, Mr. Giza. We are all hungry. We have all been here for days. None of us knows what to eat.
Scalpels WILL dust the word. you just relax and...*

88

in ter upppted

let me tell you about my sunny talons...

G.A. used to pick me up from daycare. she was like my Grandma. Libby's nectar: Peach (sort - of an insert). G.A. would bring me Libby's Peach and Pear & Apricot. Nectar in cans with pictures of the fruit.

Direction, when I was young, well when I was young probably Direction I say to myself was delivered in strokes of my body like a sword, sworn to the crabtrees in a turtle-neck, that was direction.

grab.

COmpetence? competence came at the smell. ride, arranged storage, cleaning of hooves, sha[k]ing mane and tail, spine captained between my historic/grand legs—

0 0—0, oh. it was horses. yes. sensitives answered by rides in Lake Villa. at Camp Hastings. (fried rites). but nothing royal. everything injured. just fucking kidding it was royal. Compulsion. this feels like sounds and feels too much like a relative to competence. but I will comment on compulsion for my propulsion by music. like drum n bass polishes the fancy hue I keep

on my shoulders like a cape. heavy sometimes. heavy sometimes also. lots of granite / or maybe just some professor of hard.

So... Mr. Giza, let me see if we understand. A cat for riding pulls on the leaning guts of a good carcass and like someone pulls on a beautiful pickle. You say that the dress was awake (for an instant). and that we should give you...

give me that girl-bunny.

we will, but can you produce the grip?

the Girl Bunny. I'm not sure you know who you are to me. I look into your beating eyes.

I care, though.

Rampage is that I can do everything but fix my mom. there will always be a fest of plums, however. an exciting purple bow from neck on up to wonder. last midnight hanging on a coat rack.

but you know that.

Yes, we've been aware.

but you know that my gobbling riffs of competence. and the girl bunny... ears swiveling and ranting in battle to my heart and it destroys that little sun-smile.

I thought I forced you to not refer to the non-present and non0future scribblings.

I know what you said and I know why you want it not. in paradise conditions I might agree. Sadly though, even as my mother passes slowly. I am still a champion. fucking throttle. the throttle of pears. crazy champion walking scythes of "she had long legs this girl who passed me on Harrison. Like you said welcome to Chicago. I have been here my whole life and this was the first time I had seen her pony tail. a student obviously and distraction from mother. tight and bulby fanned like the rearend of a pigeon. whomever it

82

Doctor (if that's what you are). I am a rat playing in cedar. babble-dark. my tongue ticking at the water bottle. I had a rat Daisy and another Roger and some others. (Cum for me, Plastic.) and this *this* be stung. a mustang lets its skin run off. oh, horse. bitten lace attempts to cover what that exposed raw it can.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel has a heavy door. Have you ever been through it? You were for School and Baptism. ANswer the question.

Say, is this your wintry row?

and an axis.
In early'ed January.

a stroller depth charge.

He's gone. Mr. Giza you are gone now. We have other patients to attend to. Thank you for sharing your beliefs. your snug voidbear. you will remain snagged, like a stain on a lance. verdantia.

doctordoorhallhallhallgone

* * *

elk - elk
and...
—straps—
—

the other hole is my
,m n outh.

elk.
the straps through my cheek. elk straps
through my cheek. (oh, right here.) pogolust.

inside my knuckles I chip like marble: let forth
rivers from my “I once threw up [forever] in Arizona” stomach muscles.

once in a while the sodomy of clownss.

if you braindrops.
if you

hand um on the indentations of your hips.
normality septorials.

held human in mist rares.

and you, like speedy emeralds bitched in agua...

an undershow, where emergencies are bred for the benefits of quiet paws...

you're just fucking dying.

CAROL KEELEY

WILLEY WATER

Everything is a drunkenness, loose
hair, the bare windows.
The snow is a lover's lie, isn't it?
Mizzling the rock filth, the
tar roofs with sardonic innocence.
Wait. There were women
in a plant-laced window whose throats
were laughing.
Night is a danger the lonely relinquish.

We still stink of the jellies and
the squiggling dead.
No one is here with us.
Boy's teeth so porcelain we wanted to
steal them from his sleep.
Under the spit-marked pillow, they'd
sprout a transparent fish.

She stands in the window, her arms raised
because the breasts crave gravity.
The sky sighs as if lavender also.
There are the womanly terrors as
yellowed lights flood the floorboards.
In the absence of men, all men are conjured
from the rubbed red vessel, the
bullied heart again.
And around the corner, more
whispering. Everything
squirts blood, even the
broasted chicken; puddles of garlic and
lemon grease succulent as her knife
entered a love that
gushed burgundies
onto the blank wall opposite.
Then dripped

like a message she'd
also edit.

And the young lovers slept wrapped like
a fact. Galloping that sudden wet death.

MAGNIFICAT

Midnight hunched over, one angry eye.
We found those moments under beds
in our room, after orange juice
that did not sit well.
Vomit in pink chunks on the sidewalk;
man with no nose walking by.
We learned a beauty
at home, in the schools
that had nothing to do with
the Polish night janitors going home on
the trains after midnight with duck rubbers
on, fat-buttoned coats, O Lord and
the staring they do with those blank dried eyes.
Sitting on the bench talking, not talking,
lips stitched in a crooked line, weary of
everything; sad on a bench with their
creaky backs, holding hands, turned
to the left to
watch for the train.

Beauty had something to do with
the man with the sniffily dog-leathered nose
and cracked hand who held the door for us
but we didn't know.

And the Hungarian who said yes yes I am blessed I am
blessed by God you know why I am good to my dog O
the most beautiful dog with diamond eyes my little
dog I thank God I could cry.

Blessed blessed I am blessed skipping charred
streets in my ruined shoes slip on the blister-white
heel arms flying sloppily up old man with
disgust in his ears I am blessed I am blessed I
dance hop and I sob Beauty finds me at
each dieseled corner bends to nibble its nearly nice
fear into me lick my neck I am blessed very blessed the misfits
are my family they recognize me we dance in the spit
necessarily singing
of love's sun, humiliation,
and how Beauty is just what must be.

CLAYTON ESHLEMAN

AT THE TUSK HOTEL

Lonely to death, totally engaged,
lifeless, snoring, I round
the carnal cape and bet on Africa
as the rift in my design,
the "western wind" where I was driven from
the trees.

Every poem could end here,
pointedly, on the ground,
Yet every poem begins here,
baby sling packed with amethyst and memory.

Every moment dropped me through
to bass—it's good to hum
as part of a skeletal reef pack
parked on the peninsular self.
Or to howl
as a kind of cereal
bereft of Venus but still
infested with the image vermin of the Cross.

Backdrop as scenery for the play called
My Unknowable Death. Backdrop billowing forth
elephantine balloon.
We're registered in the Tusk Hotel.
Caryl and I share a double with the abysside view,
including a cabinet with experimental poisonous gas.
Every morning, in spite of what life is,
we ensnout our masks and ripple through the Flood.

A SPANGLED MOOR

To stop for a moment and think about writing at or into
evening,
a white wisp of plant tassel floats by the window—
the lid of dark infinite space has yet to be placed.

Where does evening lead? Anywhere? Is its basis in cromlechs,
or other circular deadenings?

Sometimes evening opens and the beauty and complexity
and complicatedness of Caryl's soul
makes all that I have wanted to sing
in Les Eyzies I love to watch the light shut down,
or the dark gray through, or my mother remain in conjunction
with Ceasar,
as I dream of poems that could change something essential
about the way some people view creation...

It is now 10 degrees darker than when I started
—predator twilight is oozing fertile annihilation through
Whitman's pores—there he is! still under Bunyan
who is giving Walt a wonderful blowjob and pulling at his
beard and toes—
now what? The hour between dog and wolf,
where dog becomes foreign to what we dream to cover,
our bodies moving toward moving under,
ah, sheets, fresh sheets, a warm blanket, maybe
our beloved, or simply a friend, or a stranger,
Hemingway's corpse! phew, what a thought—

We all have our teddy bear at around 10 PM,
or a cup of tea. I work a bit now,
watching the spangled moor of my tundra dreams
soften and leaf-adjust to what I can offer.

STAN RICE

19TH CENTURY NEW WORLD LANDSCAPE PAINTING

First

Our senses are rained on continuously.
Then the New World sun rays puncture the purple clouds.
By a single hummingbird
Swollen with sage nectar
In the great side of beef which is the Grand Canyon
We are explained.
Then we are black widows in dew spangled chaos.
An orchid the length of an arm
Pulls back into the grey distance.
A rat is eating amethyst.
Out of its speckled sheathe a pink lip pooches.
A genius with yellow veins puts down his gloves
On the idiot girl's captive belly.
Down in flexing sheets comes the mist.
Against which the foreground is clowning with death, is
Putting its beak into the carotid artery
Of the *lealia purpurata*. Period of
Cherokee rose that breaks its green nut of cream
And grinds its colors. Lime gold, lemon yellow,
Amethyst rat. Period of magnolias
Like skulls in the blackgreen leaves.

WHY SEX EXISTS

The natural history of the iguana
Has no single cause. Many accidents
Fed on one another. There was no
One evil. No one success.
The catastrophe required many failures.
The world is not a row of dominoes.
Beauty is a trick. That the juiciest one
In a bikini attracts males
With promise of "healthy offspring"
Is rot. What is hot
Drives us. What we want is not
A "fertile mother" but a
You-know-what. Social Darwinists are semi-nuts.
Every theory attracts a priest class.
What starts as an imaginative model
Of the ineluctable writhing of flora and fauna
Becomes dogma.
Don't believe any literalist, any proponent.
Believe the iguana.

SEAN SLIVE

BALLOONED

what if this beat-up is the last one,
no more smokes to hold no more vibrations: you miss out, extending yourself
like that on a streetcorner for boys, slunk down in your clothing basking in the
night again okay but you were staring, and vicious produce sex only rarely and
then some of the time?

Why am I suddenly khakis and blue shirt again because giving in when if it's love
I cannot last all of the if it is I will never gossip *authority!* pick you a better day-
light

for pictures
not to blame or lay un-peeled
in floors, unopened
bags in bags
not to suffocate not to
stare where picked up
again not to stare into
bags' broken-open bottoms
fell out not to fall in
or to blame like air
the string we follow
not to downward
cause strain
solicit strange
be in stare with
strangers
lacking every fear
not to bring them home or
envision night not to
let night control
for in stare you stare
not to be city lights
new directions stain or
bring it back to falter
vast not vast to vast
not to be vast
not to be stared down or
staid not to care?

ENDS

I've gotten better at walking out the door with hat
already on my head
the morning after I ruin another perfect even
water on floor
has become full with birds and dirt stuff of an
outside litter

Where I go to drink it pours itself onto me
and the bed rises to it, covers mattress and I
taken up there with him a beautiful boy scent,
and songs which large animals can ride on I am
going to be mistaken "because young" I
throw it
into the fire up is down and between
the real world where I need to be what cloth what
fabric will save and then have

BRIAN HENRY

MINIATURE ENTOURAGE

Decide on deciduous or remain ever green
My love for envy is not your color
Today un dieu des mauvais cheveux
Medusa could use a snaky excuse
Hotwired straight to the stripping point
Vanishment in ravishment will produce a

Rather than begin with “the day”
And its “attendant anxieties”
Disappointments perverse
-ities we’ll call on something else
(No wonder allowed in these pages
No wonder the pages allow it) to travesty

The burden of the day extends itself night-
Ward marl of munificence sutured sounds
Reverberate in the oubliette of obligation
The nocturne drops into gear down- then
Upshift and the song asserts itself
Impossible arias foundering on the shore

A blanket of blankets swarms the bed
Ten degrees and cropping six sheets to the wind
The door frame chipped and tawdry
Who succumbs to coming twice in an evening
Tram or bus tram or bus tram or bus tram
Or bus tram or bus tram or bus tram

ZOE SPIRRA

HOUSEBOUND

grown fond of absence
I'm stronger than nothing

morning's fog to be got through

when forced
defended against daytime
pleasure leaches out

connections rotting at a distance

through forty days
saw mostly myself
halfway up the mountain

bird by wish
the invalid wins again

junk brain
reduced to tv shows
on lobster boy

the radiator's
glass harmonium

in kitchen and bath
vermin run rampant
tunnel from here to then

the trace of one line

the difference between
working and not

redemption comes
in the form of a picture

words open out

a fragile woman thinking of god
through disappeared smoke

blueberries and wild deer
by an overgrown creek
past abandoned house

the neat light
of my mother's rooms

soft first leaves of lettuce
floated in milk
or fresh-shelled green peas

also afraid standing alone
tricked into alley admissions

my alarm squared off
by lamp translucent sprigged
torn ivory silk shade

suffuses late fall afternoon

old outfits
past wants and stances
other light

move me to a room where

the child astounded
by such coldness
is crying on her bed

over stationary sold for school
cross-stitch rose on white card

she can't
love the girl next door
her mother's told her

for various reasons

pink begonias in fall
and past african violets

with my grandma at five
in her garden across the road
inspecting a special trillium

the air smells of wisconsin
chilled suddenly

IN THE SUMMER OF SHORT PANTS

(for rafael and kerri)

paradise reading *Tjanting*
on the back porch
after not drinking dangerous
sake behind bordellian
pink blinds

soaking up jazz
at the gin mill
hearing how Herr N.
of the secret
police intervened

and beach sunning
for the first time
in twenty years
(spf45 keep me pale)

not paradise squirming
can't concentrate
properly while feeling
book stolen
words twitch by guilt

listening to lumber
crash across the alley
need another
cup of tea to
ward off cool

with last night's
words urging
motion towards this
(keyboard make me stable)

DEVIN JOHNSTON

FAMILY TREE

Shades of gram

somatic code

I sense some strain

of you in what

I am—or did

in turning down

a cell path

choked with vines

from a relict rose

or metal vetch

impediments

of what I own

to what I owe

the shadow of

a seed unfurled

I was a wolf

and not a lamb

as your thoughts

turned to mine

ensconced in pulp

I found you

hard but not

so difficult

to understand

SHELLEY

i.

Rain—and nothing else—sweeps through these gates,
sluicing past ironwork and garden walls.

Let us assume such automatic airs:
the dirigibles we set abroad;
the fiends, pursuer and pursued;
the sexual fire, and streaming hair.

Wild smoke and wind against mere
prospects—all that gleaming trade.

ii.

A cat climbs in
 uncertainties,
the shaking
 branches of a tree;
and if the wind
 should shake her doubt,
the bough would break,
 and cat fall out.

iii.

Sun-spurge, devil's milk,
where have you gone,
abandoning the lane
to metal fear?

Your bracts are broad,
and yellow bees abroad
in this creaking atmosphere—
but substance fled
down the dreary hole
that passes for
a distant certainty.
I cannot follow you:
return to me.

iv.

Ephemera fog the surface
of the gulf, but in this court
I found the simple face

of unrelenting snow:
desire with no pleasure,
declension of bone over eye,

beneath which we rake together
chips of stone like ash
distilled from gray air.

The scuttle's coal is dim,
and calls to mind
no mutiny within,

no agonizing heat.
The marble slab omits
all question of comfort.

TONY HOOPER

LANE GUAGE ROADS STRYPING THROUGH MOUTHS

me can I call

iron

figure:

(a haunched leapheard)

with muscle english

a gorilla might spell

(while pealing adjectives raw)

pet the cat

accompanying its shelf

now their poses fizz

sounds press sure red

give birth to

cama's pause

where a buzzard cleans up after doctors
clutches word-kill
flies back to paragraph
perches, blinks eyes

below:

a snail verbs

at the bend of a road

on the suffix side

of a leaf

semi-colons away

worms tunnel into conjunctions

where birds cannot find them

below the ground of the sentence

KATHY LOVESKY

CHARMLESS WORLD

Hoarding urges high from chatable phrases
 left empty like my glass
and greater growing needs of years
 excerpted from official fathers
and box cutter fights
 that sweat greed and flapped pride out of style
damage mystifies a body lost to days
 and moments stuck glue to a suit of skin that doesn't rust
but dissolves with words and facades
 time slows to peel like fruit shells and rot into rich dirt
bought and sold
 for when and where red feet beg for scraps
from the silk napkins that line the unreachable table
 that is connected by a lottery of lazy hopes and less full desires
of a life frozen on the mantle
 with feathered hair
and dated clothes
 never realizing that there was a tomorrow
or a today
 and releasing the struggle to beer and television
once a wise guy poet now a made man
 with cinnamon rhymes
soprano inspired and desired by high cut ladies in the first row
 no one left to hear the folk manifesto of bohemian echoes
reverberating through this copper forest
 sadness for the man when no one attends his food stamp barbeque
because the snow ratio of miles on the rail seem tortured and distilled
 but I try to forget the trash speckling
 my land
 my home
and continue to build an electric Paris out of words
 resurrecting verbs and nouns from dead patriots' hands
taking over the line and sound drawn so long ago
 without a yes or no from me
alone and slipping to the sound of tropical honey violins
 serenading my voice to sleep
and my eyes to forget the day.

SHARON DARROW

HANDS ATTRACT

exact
measures utterance for
utterance restless
what is meant by touch loosening wires
deliberate as a train on the plains south of Odessa
a roundness
not brought about by
order of *motion*
tension in cloth
bearing away the morning
vining
each brick wall
each dark gate elastic note sung long
short of morning
a house inside its room two doors
where rivers of sky and
rivers of grass

carry

lost

reasons

rinsed

pure

language as blood

stone

as birth

cartoon

centuries

after the fact

*the girl dances under a broken table
stares beyond its horizon*

for the taste of it

as each new insect marches in a line two blocks long

planet without axis

a barking dog

applause

she bends

neatly into night

porcelain touched by the hand of each god *made whole* pasted onto
the only face fatherland of night the sense of hearing a
remarkable task to ask *to ask again* to stop asking

A BASIC QUESTION

of darkness
of how clocks strike bright

minutiae
ponderous minutes to go

hours of

hands

snow

ageless green dials

gaps in the furtive line
befall
standard range

moss
shell
cilia

silver-yellow
knock/slice
groove/switch

the shape of things

leaves

spaces

MURRAY MOULDING

JASON A.

came to meetings schnozzed.
He would carry himself inspirited
into our serenity. He would wind up
his gramophone and shoot pigeons.
This is not a disease, he would say.
He would come to meetings furious,
ecstatic, unconditional, fried.
He would come ripped on Pertussin
and stash the Spanish double
under his folding chair and lean over
and say Good boy. I don't remember
what else—once, as a blue hamster (fig. 8).
His lost wax process was oat meal.
Our group conscience would wait
in the truck listening for vegetables.
Thursday we let the occasions out.
Some landed in trees, some got run over.
Blame is a tempting thing to lay. Jim P.
threw the sugar, a last ditch thing
that's still having its fabrications.
We passed the basket for cases
twitching in the gutter. Finally,
when it was my turn, Blame
came out with a September Song

KATE KREKE

WHERE STRONG THINGS GROW

Fish guided school groupers
manta ray-guns set to still the placid waters
edge Eddy over to the dark side of the booth
where the shady people don't get spoken to
only smoke
while you eat
their dead eyes
smile
at the lake side property you are
they don't believe
that coughing up blood
is bad
scratching at the back door
the mad dogs to my logic
hide in back alleys
feast off the spark
in the turning machine
filled with specters
and crowds of onlookers
covered in the idea of summer
burnt into their flesh
it holds longer on the bone for it
before returning to the side streets
it came from
born under the sprinkler
in the wet grass mud
caking on the milk tasting bodies
that floated in the front door
on the smell of green beans fresh from the garden
they are fresh every night
in the eyes watching the oaks
looking for patterns and faces
in their wooden claws

JENN MOREA

THE TRANSLATOR'S WIFE

it is our 990th
wedding anniversary.

we exchange onyx.
we eat from

each other's hands
in the cellar dark.

we sleep on
a bed of dirt.

my sight is the ruins
of ancient civilizations.

my memory of light
is a mess of lines.

I translate them
into blackbirds.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN ISACSON

THREADS OF JUDGMENT, RANDOM LETTERS

I

After two months of near solitude
I had an inexplicable need to draw her.
she was given no choice
powerless to stop, to turn around.

I could barely move at all, in fact.
(I always have been fascinated by decay...
But eventually did.

disconcerting things tend to happen to me on my birthday.

II

I could find no translation
But, of course, going beyond words gets even more serious
I'm afraid that, for once *the ink is unskillful, yes, artless*
To make things worse, I can't find my French books.

They were all on little slips, like fortune cookie letters.
leaving only the merest remnants of their original form.

III

he's talking, opening the fridge,
dinner out *even though you only had a small salad*
a bit intimidated by the unshelled shrimp
going to miss all that when he actually starts eating on his own

IV

I just dreamt of Jesus.
shudder to think that Christmas is only a few months away.
I'm reading all the Carols.

V

Are you dreaming now?

VI

he *can* hear, you know.”
but I doubt they too would have Bach's cello suites playing right now,

After all, everyone knows it's taboo
but I would like to learn

VII

He kept walking amongst the graves, ghosts and screaming with delight,
(complete with beanie)
It was nice to see some performance art that wasn't all monologue by someone
in a black turtleneck for once.

—such as the odd variety of names given to the
Endurance crew's sled dogs.

it wasn't much worse than when I had put a hat on him earlier that day, which
caused him some distress

which was fairly uneventful

He says the people he has hired now aren't artists, per say.
I hadn't anticipated this and brought drawing supplies.

It sounds like he wants me
with dry ice for an eerie effect.
at the very least he'll get new ideas on how to move his hands.)

VIII

Our bathrooms must have a similar decor.
hilarious.

IX

despite the frequency of death and loss
they had us try on some of the parade costumes
—stop me if you've heard this one before—
(Overall, we spent most of the weekend overstimulated.

At the moment, I keep finding myself caught up in tiny details,
during my last trip to the drugstore, I happened to notice
the vast array of pacifiers on the market

X

So, even though I found you *you were obviously talking*
I've had to come up with my own theories *I had no translation*
That left me doubtful
Have we become one another yet? *or someone else entirely?*

HENRY ANSELMO

OLD MAN PLAYING COMPUTER HEARTS BEFORE BED

Quiet it's a little
Place so echoes.

Old heart seeps
Flowers each nerve.

Settling presents come
up down / down up.

"a meaningless world
for two."

An all to hold
To breath fading.

But strata time
And breath

A boy in smoke
Whirls away.

The Poetry Scholarship Fund

The English Department of Columbia College Chicago is pleased to have received the following donations to its Poetry Scholarship Fund. The initial goal of the fund is to raise \$20,000 to provide an annual scholarship of \$1,000 for a deserving student in the college's undergraduate poetry major. Columbia College Chicago is the only institution of higher learning in the country to offer an undergraduate poetry major, which consists of 51 semester hours of study. Further gifts are welcome and should be addressed to:

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COLUMBIA POETRY REVIEW NO. 14

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